Uneconomical operation of FM Channels

1588. SHRI K.B. KRISHNAMURTHY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to uneconomical operation of FM Channels, many licencees have surrendered their licences in Mumbai area;

(b) whether any task force has been set up by Government to study the possibility of lowering the licence fee as demanded by the private operators;

(c) whether revenue sharing has been suggested as an alternate system; and

(d) if so, whether Government and the operators have arrived at any agreement to this effect?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Five Companies had signed the Licence Agreement and deposited Bank Guarantees for private FM stations at Mumbai. All the licencees of Mumbai have operationalised their stations.

(b) to (d) A Committee have been constituted *vide* order dated 24-07.2003 to make recommendations for Radio Broadcasting for Phase-II as also to study the desirability and legal implications of making modifications in the regime of Phase-I licencees should a different regime be proposed for Phase-II.

Publication of Daily Newspapers

1589. SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Newspapers (Dailies) published in the country and the number of readers of these Dailies;

(b) whether it is a fact that these Dailies are by and large Urban oriented;

(c) if so, the percentage of coverage given by these Dailies for the Rural News items;

(d) whether it is a fact that the English Dailies are more Urban oriented; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) The total number of Newspapers (Dailies) registered with Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI) by the end of 2001 was 5638. The Government does not maintain readership data. However, on the basis of Annual Statements submitted by 1308 dailies for the year 2001, their claimed circulation was 5,78,44,236.

(b) and (c) Annual Statements submitted by the 1308 dailies indicate that by and large, they have larger proportion of urban circulation. The percentage of coverage by the dailies of the rural news items is not maintained by the Government.

(d) and (e) Further, an analysis of the newspapers registered with RNI indicates that English dailies had larger concentration in urban areas.

Role of NFDC

1590. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the role of the National Film Development Corporation in giving support, financial or otherwise, to the film connected activities running in different States;

(b) the role played by NFDC in the film-related affairs of Tripura; and

(c) the details of the administrative network the NFDC has formed all over the country and the extent of its achievements?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) The mission of National Film Development Corporation Ltd. (NFDC) is to be a leader in fostering excellence in cinema and to promote culture and understanding through the audio-visual media.